## **CLAIMS**

- 1. Inner tightening mechanism adapted to equip a footwear (CH) having a flexible or semi-rigid upper (O) mounted on a sole (100), characterized in that it includes a retention band (1) that is connected to the inner surface (Oa) of the upper (O) by at least two anchoring points (12, 22) fixed on the lateral and medial sides, respectively, of the upper (O), and which partially surrounds the foot in the area of the flexion fold in the direction of the heel.
- 2. Inner tightening mechanism according to claim 1, characterized in that at least one anchoring point (12, 22) is positioned substantially above the sole (100).
- 3. Inner tightening mechanism according to claim 2, characterized in that at least one anchoring point (12, 22) is positioned substantially on the central portion (2) of the line (L) connecting the base of the heel (101) to the flexion fold (102) of the foot (P).
- 4. Inner tightening mechanism according to one of claims 1-2, characterized in that the anchoring point (22) includes a sliding return (5), and in that the retention band (1), which is fixed at its end (1a) to the anchoring point (12), passes in the sliding return (5) by defining a portion (S1) which covers the foot.
- 5. Inner tightening mechanism according to one of claims 1-2, characterized in that the retention band (1) includes a fork (15) comprising two arms (16, 17) whose arm (16) integrates the anchoring point (12), and in that the arm (17) is fixed on the inner surface (Oa) of the upper (O) by a complementary anchoring point (32) that is positioned on the same side of the upper (O) as the anchoring point (12).
- 6. Inner tightening mechanism according to one of claims 1-5, characterized in that the portion (S2) of the retention band (1), which is comprised between the return (5) and the end (1b) of the retention band (1), includes an appropriate fixing means (7) capable of maintaining the tension in the tightening mechanism.

P21548.S01 S 816/US

7. Inner tightening mechanism according to claim 6, characterized in that the footwear (CH) is equipped with an inner shoe (CH') having an upper (O'), and in that the upper (O') of the inner shoe (CH') includes a fixing means (27) that is complementary to the fixing means (7).

- 8. Inner tightening mechanism according to claim 6, characterized in that the portion (S1) of the retention band (1) includes a fixing means that is complementary to the fixing means (7).
- 9. Inner tightening mechanism according to claim 6, characterized in that the inner surface (Oa) of the upper (O) includes a fixing means (29) that is complementary to the fixing means (7).
- 10. Inner tightening mechanism according to one of claims 6-9, characterized in that the fixing means (7) is of the self-gripping type.
- 11. Inner tightening mechanism according to one of claims 1-10, characterized in that the retention band (1) includes a gripping means (8) that is arranged on the portion (S1) and which enables the loosening of the inner tightening mechanism.
- 12. Inner tightening mechanism according to one of claims 1-11, characterized in that the footwear (CH) is equipped with an inner shoe (CH') which includes at least two raising elements (10, 11) that are fixed on the lateral side and on the medial side, respectively, of the inner shoe (CH'), and in that the retention band (1) takes support especially on the raising elements (10, 11).
- 13. Inner tightening mechanism according to one of claims 1-12, characterized in that the retention band (1) includes at least one distribution plate (13) that is fixed, in the area of the portion (S1), beneath the retention band (1).
- 14. Inner tightening mechanism according to claim 5, characterized in that the arm (16) is positioned substantially along the primary direction (1002) that passes by the base of the heel and by the flexion fold, and in that the arm (17) also passes by the flexion fold but along a secondary direction (1001) that is less inclined than the primary direction (1002).

P21548.S01 S 816/US

15. Inner tightening mechanism according to claim 14, characterized in that the arms (16, 17) are fixed to the upper (O) on the medial side of the footwear (CH).

- 16. Inner tightening mechanism according to claim 4, characterized in that the anchoring point which includes the sliding return is positioned on the medial side of the footwear (CH).
- 17. Inner tightening mechanism according to claim 4, characterized in that the upper (O) includes a housing (30) on its inner surface (Oa), in the area where the sliding return (5) is located.
- 18. Footwear (CH) equipped with the inner tightening mechanism according to one of claims 1-16.